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General Assembly
Seventieth session
Agenda items 16, 65, 70 and 72

Culture of peace

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions

Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

Promotion and protection of human rights

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Letter dated 16 May 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to inform you about the Second Global Forum against the Crime of Genocide, which was held in Yerevan on 23 April 2016. Bringing together representatives of international organizations, genocide scholars, parliamentarians, academics and representatives of civil society, the Second Forum, entitled "Living Witnesses of Genocide" focused on forced displacement and relocation leading to premeditated mass killings and extermination. Such acts were common features of the twentieth century genocides. Displacement has been present in different cycles of genocide before and after mass killings. The aftermath of genocide has been marked by refugee crisis and transgenerational trauma among victims. In this context, it is important to assess the historical evolution of the protection of victims of genocide, including refugees, in international humanitarian and human rights law.

The Second Global Forum against the Crime of Genocide was built on the success of the inaugural forum, held in Yerevan on 22 and 23 April 2015, which addressed issues concerning the development of means of prevention of crimes against humanity in international law, the elimination of the consequences of genocide and accountability.

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Armenia has been consistently contributing to the efforts of the international community to advance the prevention of genocide at the international level. As you know, in March 2015, the Human Rights Council of the United Nations adopted a renewed resolution (resolution 28/34) on the prevention of genocide, sponsored by Armenia, which contains important references to new mechanisms and prevention frameworks. Upon the initiative of Armenia, in September 2015, the General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution 69/323, proclaiming the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime, in which it encourages all States, international and regional organizations and individuals to observe the International Day in order to raise awareness of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and its role in combating and preventing the crime of genocide, as well as to commemorate and honour the victims. These resolutions and the Global Forum add to the continued efforts of Armenia to promote consolidated international action against the crime of genocide.

For further details on the Global Forum against the Crime of Genocide please consult the website of the Forum, www.gfyerevan.am/.

I transmit herewith (see annexes) the conclusions in the form of the Declaration and the Final Statement and Recommendations of the First and Second Global Forums against the Crime of Genocide, held in Yerevan in April 2015 and April 2016. I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 16, 65, 70 and 72, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Zohrab **Mnatsakanyan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex I to the letter dated 16 May 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Second Global Forum against the Crime of Genocide
23 April 2016, Yerevan

Final statement and recommendations

The Global Forum

Hails the initiative of the National Assembly and the Government of the Republic of Armenia to host the Second Global Forum in Yerevan on 23 April 2016;

Welcomes the unanimous adoption in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly of its resolution proclaiming 9 December the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime, which stresses, inter alia, the necessity to raise awareness regarding the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide;

Pays special tribute and expresses gratitude to all those who stood up in the name of humanity, acting with courage and sacrifice and saved multiple innocent lives in the times of humanitarian crises and genocide;

Expresses deep concern with regard to the recent alarming outspread of atrocities and genocidal killings by ISIS and other terrorist groups in the Middle East and other parts of the world, which directly threaten ethnic and religious minorities and produce widespread humanitarian crises, including the highest number of refugees and displaced persons since World War II;

Recognizes that humanitarian crises of this magnitude require synergy of efforts and cannot be addressed by any State singlehandedly, and firmly believes that the humanitarian response in addressing challenges associated with the unprecedented numbers of refugees and displaced persons should by no means become the subject of political manipulations;

Echoes the call of the Yerevan Declaration adopted by the Global Forum against the Crime of Genocide in April 2015, to all States to bring their utmost contribution to the strengthening of genocide prevention mechanisms;

Calls on all States, parliaments, international organizations, civil society and other stakeholders to join efforts in a spirit of renewed commitment to combat the evil of genocide and other crimes against humanity;

Emphasizes the importance and necessity of teaching the history of humankind as well as the causes and consequences of genocide with a view to achieving comprehensive and objective recognition of the crimes of the past;

Recommends that the next Global Forum to focus on the role of education, tools, methods and skills as a part of our shared responsibility to eliminate hatred, intolerance and xenophobia, and *believes* that education and knowledge sharing are critical for the eradication of the scourge of genocide;

Decides to convene the next meeting in April 2018 in the Republic of Armenia.

Annex II to the letter dated 16 May 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Global Forum against the Crime of Genocide Yerevan Declaration 23 April 2015

The Global Forum

Paying tribute to the memory of the innocent victims of the Armenian Genocide, the genocides of Greeks and Assyrians, the Holocaust, the genocides in Rwanda, Cambodia, Darfur and other crimes against humanity,

Recalling the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of the United Nations,

Being concerned about the recurring cases of genocides and crimes against humanity, despite the existing appropriate international prevention mechanisms,

Being also concerned about the recent alarming outspread of violence, extremism and terrorism in different regions of the world, directly threatening the ethnic and religious minorities,

Bearing in mind the emergence and the evolution of the international criminalization of genocide in international law,

Having discussed the issues of impunity, individual and State accountability for the crime of genocide, the appropriate means of addressing the consequences of this crime,

Noting the importance of the global struggle against genocides and crimes against humanity,

Emphasizing the role that various governments, parliaments, international organizations and civil society have in the prevention of genocide and their contribution to fostering prevention mechanisms,

- Acknowledges that genocide is the ultimate crime with irreversible consequences, and calls upon all States to bring their utmost contribution to the strengthening of genocide prevention mechanisms,
- Reaffirms that the primary genocide prevention mechanisms remain the ones existing in the framework of the United Nations and welcomes the adoption of a United Nations Human Rights Council resolution on 27 March 2015 entitled "Prevention of genocide",
- Stresses that genocide prevention depends on the efficiency of human rights protection, the strength of the culture of tolerance and non-discrimination,
- Recognizes that denial, in particular on a State level, is unacceptable and underlines that timely condemnation of genocides and efficiently addressing their consequences may serve as important tools for prevention and reconciliation,
- Calls upon the international community on the eve of the centennial commemorations of the Armenian Genocide to support the continuous efforts aimed at its worldwide recognition.